(b) if the answer to part (a) above be in the affirmative what is the maximum limit of financial assistance to be given to such projects individually which may include land, building, office equipment, furnitures, kitchen facilities, airconditioning, preliminary and pre-operative expenses including interest during the implementation of project and contingencies etc.; and the details thereof; and

(c) what are the names/details of items which may be covered under the project cost, named above, individuallyfll

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The limit of financial assistance to any project under this sector is dependent on the status of the applicant unit. While the maximum limit of loan in case of proprietor and partnership concern is Rs. 60 lacs, in case of private and Public limited companies and Cooperative Societies, the maximum limit is Rs. 90 lacs subject to the condition that a debt-equity ratio of 2·1 is maintained.

(c) All the items mentioned in part (b) of the question are covered under the project cost

Appointment of Chief Election Commissioner

955. SHRI N. E. BALARAM:
SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:
SHRI E. BALANANDAN·

Will the Minister of LAF AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representation from Seven Women's organisations protesting against the appointment of a civil servant as Chief Election Commissioner ignoring officiating as the acting CEC;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Women's Organisations have protested against the appointment of the present Chief Election Commissioner and have urged re-consideration of the Government's decision;

(c) The appointment of the present Chief Election Commissioner is strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and there is neither any necessity nor is there any provision for re-consideration of the appointment made.

Import of Coconut Oil

956. SHRI N. E. BALARAM· Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state.

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to import coconut oil;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Kerala State Government has opposed this move as it is in contravention of the Centre's assurance in the past that it would not import Copra and coconut oil as it would break the backbone of the coconut cultivators in the State; and

(d) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHANTILAL PURUSHOTTAMDAS PATEL) (a) and (b) Yes, Sir The Government has decided to import a limited quantity of Coconut oil mainly as a price stabilisation measure in the domestic market

(c) and (d) Though the Kerala State Government has not supported the import of Coconut oil, no assurance appeals to have been given by the Government in the past not to import Copra or Coconut oil.

Trading in REP Licences

957. SHRI N. E. BALARAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the trading in Replenishment (REP) licences at high premium has become a flourishing business recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHANTILAL PURUSHOTTAMDAS PATEL): (a) to (c) In terms of para 199 of the Import and Export Policy, 1990-93 (Vol. I), Import Replenishment Licences (REP Licences) are freely transferable. The amount of premium on transfer of such licences is guided by the market forces. Government do not keep any statistics on the premium charged on such transfers.

Introduction of transparent accounting system for banks

958. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce a transparent accounting system for the public sector banks; and

(b) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) (a) Yes, Sir

(b) Does not arise.

Merger of New Bank of India with another Nationalised Bank

959 SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal for merging New Bank of India with another nationalised bank;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that almost all the major organisations of bank officers and employees have opposed the proposed merger; and

(d) if so, on what grounds and what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Government is not contemplating to merge New Bank of India with another nationalised bank.

(c) and (d) All India New Bank of India Officers Association All India New Bank of India Employees Federation and others have represented to the Government that the merger of New Bank of India with another public sector bank will shake public confidence in public sector banks They have further suggested that New Bank of India should be retained as an independent entity and financial assistance should be provided to ensure its viability

Expiry of the wage agreement in the spinning unit at Chandrapur under NTC

960 SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state